

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

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Property Address:	<b>1932 9<sup>th</sup> Street, NW</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>Greater U Street Historic District</b>	X Consent Calendar
		X Concept Review
Meeting Date:	<b>October 27, 2011</b>	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	<b>09-393</b>	X New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>	Demolition
		Subdivision

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The applicant, architect Greg Kearley of Inscape Studio representing owner Paul So, seeks on-going conceptual design review for an apartment and retail building proposed on a vacant site in the U Street Historic District. The project would also include a new three-story building at the rear of the site where it backs up to 9-1/2 Street, NW, a former alley with a row of 19<sup>th</sup> century alley dwellings.

When last presented in December 2009, the HPRB asked for a number of specific elements of the design to be restudied. These included lowering the height of the roof stairs and visibility of the roof deck, restudying the storefront, balconies and cladding tile on the façade, and pulling back the roof deck on the 9-1/2 Street elevation.

**Revised Proposal**

The proposal has been revised in all the areas recommended by the Board. The first floor storefront has been made smaller and is now centered on the elevation with flanking doors. The balconies have been recessed so that they no longer project beyond the building line, and have been given greater solidity with a centered privacy panel. The small mosaic tile has been replaced by a larger subway tile to evoke the patterning and size of bricks while still providing an alternative color and texture.

The height of the building has been lowered by slight reductions in the floor heights while the parapet wall has been raised slightly; the changes have allowed the roof decks to be sunk entirely under the height of the parapet. The penthouses have been reduced to the minimum size to include only stair access. A brise soleil has been added to more emphatically cap the building at the fourth floor.

On the 9-1/2 Street elevation, the roof deck has been pulled back from the edge of the building and the overhanging “prow” eliminated.

**Evaluation**

The revisions have all improved the compatibility of the design. While the changes in height are relatively modest, by reducing and sinking the penthouse elements and roof-top decks lower and within the parapet, it will result in them being largely eliminated from public view. The changes in the size, shape and scale of the storefront are also

improvements, resulting in a more harmonious relationship with the storefronts on surrounding historic buildings.

The elimination of the fifth floor living space has been made up by increasing the footprints of the building in the rear. While this increased footprint will likely require zoning relief for lot occupancy, it does not affect important character defining features of the historic district.

**Recommendation**

The HPO recommends that the Review Board approve the revised conceptual design as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff. The Board's approval of the concept should not be construed as an endorsement for any required zoning relief, which is subject to different considerations and standards than that applied under the preservation act.